



Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>

Why no answers?

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>
To: Enock Nyariki <enyariki@poynter.org>

Sat, Sep 24, 2022 at 5:40 PM

Hi Enock,

I hope your weekend is going well, and I hope you bill these extra hours to your employer. 😊

In the case you describe, the process is to submit a correction request to the organization if you believe the fact-checker reached an incorrect conclusion.

That's exactly what I did. The link to an image of the email I sent to PolitiFact is right there embedded in my email to you.

If you have evidence that the organization has seriously breached the code, then you can file a complaint to IFCN using the right channel so that an independent assessor can review it.

My email to you likewise contains a link to the image of the email I sent to the IFCN documenting the correction request I sent to PolitiFact and the file containing a description of the problem, both of which I emailed to the IFCN because the complaint interface was not working at the time. Of course I have no idea whether the IFCN approved the complaint and no idea whether an independent assessor ever laid eyes on it. That's because the IFCN lacks transparency about such things. What I *can* do is look at the assessment an independent assessor filed after I made the complaint and look for evidence the assessor saw that complaint (or others that I sent). There's [an assessment dated March 2021](#) that contains the following line:

The complaints that this applicant has received are not substantiated in showing a pattern on violating any criteria, therefore do not constitute a violation of the Code of Principles.

That line is accompanied by the header "Additional explanation from IFCN Staff," so that leaves considerable doubt whether the independent assessor, Laurence Bigot, ever saw as much as one complaint. If he had, then we should expect Bigot to write his own judgment. Bigot, however, has nothing at all to say about any complaints filed about PolitiFact. He does fault PolitiFact for not explaining to readers that "some complaints may justify no response." What complaints were considered? Why were they judged "not substantiated in showing a (pattern) on violating any criteria"? Who knows? I sure don't. There's never been any explanation. I [sent an inquiry to the IFCN asking what happened with my complaints](#) but never heard back. The story with the previous assessment (by Mike Wagner) is more harrowing, if anything. Maybe I'll tell you about that one sometime.

If any of my complaints were shown as lacking support, I'd be fine with the IFCN's process. But it's entirely lacking in transparency and I have to say I'm happy to put my credibility up against PolitiFact's on [the issue of whether rising real wages can fail to keep up with inflation](#). It is, just as I described it, a glaring error. If Bigot and/or the IFCN can't see the error then that is again a reflection on the poor accountability process.

Cheers. And I sincerely appreciate the time you're taking to hear me out and respond.

[Quoted text hidden]